

11

invention extends to all such modifications and/or additions and that the scope of the present invention is limited solely by the claims set forth below.

What is claimed is:

1. A building access control apparatus for use with a security system that is operably connected to a communication network, the access control apparatus comprising:
 - an input device;
 - an electronic communication device adapted to be operably connected to the communication network and to the input device;
 - an output device operably connected to the communication device; and
 - an encoder separate from said input device operably connected to the communication device, said encoder being associated with an alphabetical index and providing an input to the communication device to effect an output on said output device of said building access control apparatus;
 - an outer housing including a door and defining an interior and an exterior, the exterior of the outer housing including said input device; and
 - a substantially closed inner housing, defining an interior and an exterior, removably mounted within the interior of the outer housing;
 - wherein said electronic communication device is within the interior of the inner housing.
2. An access control apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein said input device comprises a plurality of keys.
3. An access control apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein said output device comprises a visual display.
4. An access control apparatus as defined in claim 1 further comprising an electronic directory of names and codes associated with said names.
5. An access control apparatus as defined in claim 4 wherein said encoder has a plurality of positions, each position corresponding to a particular portion of the alphabet, said visual display displaying at least one entry from said electronic directory corresponding to said particular portion of the alphabet.
6. An access control apparatus as defined in claim 4, wherein said apparatus further comprises a scrolling device to enable a user to scroll through said electronic directory.
7. An access control apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the communication device comprises a microprocessor.
8. A method for locating a desired name of a building occupant and a code associated with the desired name in an electronic directory of an access control apparatus as defined in claim 4, the method comprising:
 - selecting a particular portion of the alphabet with said encoder; and
 - outputting at least an initial name corresponding to said particular portion of the alphabet on said output device.
9. A building access control apparatus for use with a security system that is operably connected to a telephone system, the access control apparatus comprising:
 - a plurality of keys arranged in predetermined locations on the building access control apparatus;
 - an electronic communication device adapted to be operably connected to the telephone system and to the keys;
 - a microphone operably connected to the communication device;

12

- a speaker operably connected to the communication device;
 - a visual display operably connected to the communication device;
 - an encoder separate from said keys operably connected to the communication device, said encoder being associated with an alphabetical index and providing an input to the communication device to effect an output on said visual display;
 - an outer housing including a door and defining an interior and an exterior, the exterior of the outer housing including said keys; and
 - a substantially closed inner housing, defining an interior and an exterior, removably mounted within the interior of the outer housing;
 - wherein said electronic communication device is within the interior of the inner housing.
10. An access control apparatus as defined in claim 9 further comprising an electronic directory of names and codes associated with said names.
 11. An access control apparatus as defined in claim 10 wherein said encoder has a plurality of positions, each position corresponding to a particular portion of the alphabet, said visual display displaying at least one entry from said electronic directory corresponding to said particular portion of the alphabet.
 12. An access control apparatus as defined in claim 11, wherein said encoder comprises a rotary dial that is rotatable to each of said positions.
 13. An access control apparatus as defined in claim 11, wherein said apparatus further comprises a scrolling device to enable a user to scroll through said electronic directory.
 14. An access control apparatus as defined in claim 13, wherein said scrolling device is a slew switch.
 15. An access control apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein the communication device comprises a microprocessor.
 16. An access control apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein the keys comprise keys respectively corresponding to the numbers 0-9.
 17. An access control apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein said visual display is a single line display.
 18. An access control apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein said visual display is a multiple line display.
 19. A method for locating a desired name of a building occupant and a code associated with the desired name in an electronic directory of an access control apparatus as defined in claim 11, the method comprising:
 - selecting a particular portion of the alphabet with said encoder; and
 - displaying at least an initial name corresponding to said particular portion of the alphabet on said visual display.
 20. A method as defined in claim 19 further comprising the step of scrolling through said electronic directory beginning at said initial name to find the desired name.
 21. A method as defined in claim 19 wherein for said particular portion of the alphabet there are a plurality of names stored in alphabetical order in said electronic directory, said step of displaying an initial name comprising selecting an intermediate name from said plurality of names and displaying said intermediate name on said visual display.